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ABSTRACT

In a study to examine journalistic integrity, two recent surveys answered by a combined total of 1,936 American journalists requested responses to questions as well as to specific hypothetical ethical dilemmas. In Survey A (conducted in 1983), questions were structured to provide information on beliefs and/or news media policy in four categories of potential journalistic ethical problems: (1) gifts, favors, and free travel; (2) outside activities; (3) journalistic contests; and (4) news judgment. Survey B, designed as a followup to the 1983 study, specifically involved news judgment and journalistic technique and provided 30 case studies of possible ethical dilemmas. Responses to Survey A showed that in contrast to an earlier 1974 study, the following conditions exist currently: there is now a greater likelihood of having guidelines about accepting gifts; enthusiasm for journalistic contests has declined; and less inclination exists to violate legal or ethical privacy codes or generally accepted standards of behavior. Results of Survey B show that American journalists seem to be shifting the focus of their ethical concerns from such internal matters as gifts, favors, and conflict of interest to such external matters as news judgments and acceptable journalistic technique, while still being split about the extent to which one should go in seeking information and the extent to which information should be made public. (Tables of findings and questionnaires are included.) (EL)

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ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND MODERN JOURNALISTS

A Paper Presented to

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THE ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION

IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

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ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND MODERN JOURNALISTS

Despite the fact that codes of journalistic practices are more standard than they were ten years ago, ethical dilemmas still confuse and confound modern journalists. Sometimes torn between competitive tradition and the dictates of conscience and noting growing public criticism in spite of their best efforts, many journalists are bewildered about accepted principles of journalistic behavior. Sometimes journalists disagree with what they believe are accepted reporting procedures. They see discrepancies between print and broadcast ethics and often between standards of individual papers or stations.

To further complicate the issue, some studies show that while most of the public regards journalists as ethical, knowledgeable, and usually accurate, a significant percentage believes most journalists make up information, too often violate privacy and are more interested in scoops than serving the public.

Should journalists continue their work status quo, believing the favorable side of that public opinion, or should they accept the public call for change? Does journalistic freedom automatically mean ignoring the wishes of those in the audience? Are the various news media coming any closer to standard principles than they had ten years ago? Must journalists ignore their consciences to do their jobs competently and competitively?

Two recent surveys answered by a combined total of 1,936 American journalists, posed questions designed to determine response to such questions, as well as personal reactions to specific hypothetical ethical dilemmas. The surveys included such questions as: Should a newspaper identify a 13-year-old accused of murder? Is it ever ethical for a reporter to use a fictitious name to get a story? Is it acceptable for reporters to accept free tickets to movies, sports events or concerts? Are all gifts unethical? When, if ever, should names and/or addresses of crime victims be published or broadcast? Do broadcast journalists follow the same ethical standards as their print colleagues?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Questions associated with journalistic standards and practices, i.e., ethics, ultimately are derived from the relationships between American journalism and its public. In recent years, that relationship has been reported as having deteriorated. The American mass media, it is said repeatedly, do not enjoy the trust and credibility they need if they are to live up to their roles as representatives of the public, as independent observers of government and major social institutions and as protectors of individual rights.

Put in its most straight-forward manner, the news media cannot be effective if they do not have the trust of the public they serve.

In 1978, Louis Banks, former managing editor of Fortune magazine and later of the faculty of the Sloan School,

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, wrote a hard-hitting article for Atlantic titled "Memo to the Press: They Hate You Out There" (April 1978, p. 37). Banks wrote of the attitudes of American business executives about the news media, but his rifle approach had a shotgun effect. That theme has been echoed by pollsters, politicians, religion leaders, athletes and sports executives and -- ever more -- journalists themselves.

Ken Auchincloss, managing editor of Newsweek, sought to explain the public criticism in 1983 to a group of journalism educators, listing three reasons for the public outcry:

(1) Journalists, in the past few years, have gone too far in their prying into the lives of government officials and the nation's major institutions. The public -- even though it understands the necessity of journalists' so-called "watchdog function" -- feels the constant disparagement has gotten out of hand.

(2) This is an age of exaggeration of the influence of the news media. The public, because it feels the media are enormously powerful, tends to blame many of the nation's social ills on the media.

(3) Journalists are "crybabies." They cannot take criticism. Every time someone dares make a negative comment, journalists react as if "all of our freedoms are about to be taken away." Journalists seem to expect treatment which they give no one else.

The importance of ethical matters cannot be overestimated.

Ethics, defined broadly, represent more than goals of journalistic performance. Ethics provide the very basis of evaluation of American journalism. And such evaluation is being conducted almost daily by various polling organizations.

For example, a Washington Post telephone poll conducted by Chilton Research Services (August 16, 1981, pp. A1-A2) showed that people "find much they approve of . . . but they are sharply critical of the national press nevertheless." A Los Angeles Times survey (October 11, 1981, pp. 1, 13) indicated the public still supported the concept of a free press, but demonstrated "periodic disenchantment." A Newsweek (Gallup) poll (May 4, 1981, pp. 50-54) reported that 38 percent of the respondents rated journalists high in honesty and ethical standards compared to other occupations, 44 percent rated them average and 13 percent rated them low. And in 1983, Lou Harris (APME News, January 1984, pp. 3-8) reported that confidence in the press had risen slightly after several years of decline.

Additional cause for some optimism about media credibility came in an article in Presstime (February 1983, pp. 4-9) by Maxwell E. McCombs and Laura Washington who suggested that the public's perception of the news media is more positive than is widely believed. They pointed out that attitudes about the news media may be characterized as part of a broader lack of confidence in all institutions.

Journalistic response to this assessment has been widespread, represented in part by recent writing and/or revising of institutional codes of ethics and individual news media policy

statements. Another important element has been self-study. Among early studies of news media ethical practices was a set of three by the Associated Press Managing Editors in 1972, 1973 and 1974. At the conclusion of the third study, committee chair Joe Shoquist of the Milwaukee Journal wrote:

"Now in its third year of the committee's existence, we have attempted to take a new measure of the situation. We are greatly encouraged by what we have found. It is clear that the situation is changing. A number of newspapers have adopted formal codes of ethics since the first (1972) survey was taken. Apparently many others have tightened up their practices...."

More recently, the American Society of Newspaper Editors has commissioned a number of studies, combining analysis of the journalistic response with advice on how to deal with situations. Among important reports from ASNE are: "Newspaper Credibility: Building Reader Trust;" "Drawing the Line" (Frank McCulloch, editor); "Relating to Readers in the '80s;" and "Editors, Publishers and Newspaper Ethics" (Philip Meyer).

The surveys reported in this paper represent efforts to add to the measurement of the response of American journalism to continuous public assessment. Both surveys were sponsored by the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi and conducted through the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University.

METHODOLOGY

Survey A, a four-page questionnaire, was sent to samples of the memberships of the Associated Press Managing Editors, SPJ,SDX

and the Radio-Television News Directors Association. The first mailing of questionnaires and an explanatory cover letter was followed two weeks later by a reminder post card.

Completed questionnires were returned by 1,027 journalists, representing a 51.3 percent return.

The questionnaires were designed to provide bases for comparison with historical data, but, at the same time, to emphasize journalistic issues of more recent concern. Thus, 21 questions were taken directly from a similar study conducted in 1974 by APME. Responses offered as alternatives in 1983 were those given by at least 10 percent in the earlier survey.

Other questions were designed to emphasize issues of journalistic ethics which have increased in attention since 1974. These were drawn up in consultation with several members of the SPJ/SDX Ethics Committee.

Questions asked were structured to provide information on beliefs and/or news media policy in four categories of potential journalistic ethical problems: (1) gifts, favors and free travel; (2) outside activities; (3) journalistic contests; and (4) news judgment. Appendix A provides the complete questionnaire.

This resulted in three different, although similar, questionnaires, with individual questions being tailored to account for the three organizations making up the sample. Questions sent to APME and RTNDA members were nearly identical, with the only changes being references to "broadcast station" or "newspaper.

The makeup of the SPJ,SDX membership, however, required a different approach. Since the society has members who do not work directly for a news medium, it was necessary to restructure the questions to allow statements of opinions about the issues. Questions which related directly to news medium policy were eliminated.

Such variations, of course, would have impact on the comparability of responses. For this reason, most of the results in this report are presented separately, with totals provided only as a general indication of overall responses. Throughout the study, the range of error falls between 2 percent and 6 percent for most results presented.

Space was provided on the questionnaire for comments, and respondents were encouraged to provide another answer if they were not satisfied with those provided. Many did comment additionally, either on the form itself or in separate letters. Many sent policy statements, codes of ethics, clippings and other helpful documents.

Survey B, designed as a followup to the 1983 study, specifically involved news judgment and journalistic technique. It was designed after results of the initial survey indicated that answers involving judgment and technique produced the least consensus of all categories.

The four-page questionnaire (Table 21) was sent to 2,600 journalists, representing samples of mailing lists provided by SPJ,SDX, APME, RTNDA and the National Broadcast Editorial Association. An additional 200 names were selected randomly from

Editor & Publisher Yearbook to assure that the sample included editors from a range of circulations.

Completed questionnaires were received from 909 journalists, a 34.9 percent response.

The questionnaire provided 30 case studies of possible ethical dilemmas. These situations involved invasions of privacy, conflicts between the roles of journalist and citizen, use of deception in gathering information and various specific techniques which occasionally find their way into journalistic usage. For each case study, the journalists were asked to respond to two questions:

(1) Do you believe typical commercial U.S. news organizations, given normal competition, would have done the same thing?

(2) If such a decision could be made in a vacuum, with the only motivation being the dictates of your personal conscience, would you have done the same thing?

Again, space was provided on the questionnaire, and respondents were encouraged to make additional comments or give explanations of the answers. Many took advantage of this opportunity.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS: SURVEY A

Survey A was a general effort designed to determine journalistic attitudes and/or news organization policies about generally accepted ethical issues. Four potential problem areas were considered: gifts, favors and free travel; outside activities, journalistic contests; and news judgment.

Gifts, Favors, Free Travel

Responses showed that print media are more likely than in past years to have specific guidelines governing acceptance of gifts and participation in outside activities. Broadcast media, however, were less likely than their print colleagues to have or enforce such specific policies.

Most of the APME members (98 percent) said their news organizations ruled out all gifts, except for token gifts in some cases. In the 1974 study, only 44 percent of the APME respondents said yes to this question. Nearly 79 percent of the RTNDA members also said gifts were forbidden, and 84.9 percent of the SPJ respondents indicated that gifts should be ruled out (Table 1).

When asked if their organization would accept a free trip under any circumstances, 51 percent of the APME members and 34.7 percent of the RTNDA members said "no." Negative response in the 1974 study was only 27 percent (Table 2).

In 1974, only 30 percent of those surveyed had policies regarding the acceptance of gifts. This survey shows 88 percent of the managing editors and 63.3 percent of the news directors function with such policies today.

More than 75 percent of the stations and newspapers said they have stated policies about outside work and activities that may conflict with objectivity. In 1974, only 9 percent of the APME respondents indicated they had such policies.

Staffers who accept gifts despite company policies will find their jobs in greater jeopardy than in 1974. According to 86.3 percent of the APME members and 66.3 percent of the RTNDA members, having gifts sent from a source to a staffer's home, for

example, would be grounds for discharge. Sixty percent of the SPJ members agreed (Table 3).

Accepting free tickets to sports events, however, apparently still is considered different from a news medium's acceptance of other types of free items. Only 18.3 percent of the APME respondents and 8 percent of the RTNDA members forbid accepting complimentary sports tickets, although most of those stipulate that such tickets be used only by the reporter who is covering the events (Table 4).

Free tickets to theaters and movies, however, are considered unacceptable by 44.4 percent of the APME and 20.6 percent of the RTNDA members (Table 5).

Some respondents advocated a hard line against accepting free tickets and found policies allowing free sports tickets but not free movie tickets to be inconsistent.

Although much progress appears to have been made toward a consensus on accepting "freebies," total agreement still does not exist. Written comments on the questionnaires indicated the opinion that smaller news organizations in particular, by assuming a hard stance, would sacrifice valuable stories or alienate sources. Although journalists looking for an absolute guideline on this issue will not gain one from this survey, in general, near consensus on the matter of "freebies" appears to have been institutionally achieved.

Outside Activities

Most news organizations have few problems with outside activities such as second jobs and freelancing. Restrictions are

clearly outlined, and broadcasters and newspapers generally are in agreement (Table 7).

One source of possible ethical problems which has not prompted the writing of policies, however, is the potential conflict of a journalist's job with the employment or position of his or her spouse. Eighty-five percent of the RTNDA and 78.8 percent of the APME respondents said they have no policy. SPJ members, asked if they believed such a policy should be established, were evenly divided (Table 6).

Second jobs generally are acceptable, although most guidelines indicate they must be nonconflicting positions. Teaching was the most acceptable alternative, with 96 percent of the news organizations surveyed allowing it. In the 1974 survey, only 26 percent approved of teaching. Other forms of outside work and activities, such as announcing or serving as scorekeeper at sports activities, did not receive such approval, with 67.6 percent of the APME and 21.6 percent of the broadcasters forbidding those activities. According to 90 percent of the managing editors and 72.4 percent of the news directors, promotional work is not allowed.

Holding public office, either elected or appointive, was not allowed by 66.4 percent of the APME and 49.7 percent of the RTNDA (Table 8). About 40 percent of all three organizations prohibit news personnel from becoming involved in political or ideological activities. This is a more negative response than the 1974 study (Table 9).

Freelancing stories and pictures is considered acceptable by

nearly 65 percent of newspapers and broadcasters surveyed which is considerably more than the 26 percent saying "yes" in 1974. Most, however, have restrictions on freelancing, especially that it be done only for noncompetitors (Table 10).

Both broadcasters and newspapers, although to differing degrees, apparently believe that restriction of outside financial interests would be an unwarranted intrusion into the private lives of their employees. Sixty-six percent of the APME respondents and 81.4 percent of the RTNDA members said they place no restrictions on outside financial interests such as owning stocks or property. Of the SPJ members, 62.7 percent saw no need for restrictions. In spite of its negative tone, this response does show more concern on the part of the news media than was expressed by the APME respondents in 1974 when 76 percent had no restrictions (Table 11).

Contests

Enthusiasm for journalistic contests apparently has declined over the past decade. Respondents to this survey indicated that 51.8 percent of the managing editors (compared to 68.4 percent in 1974) were supportive of such contests. Only 36.6 percent of the broadcasters and 42.7 percent of the SPJ members indicated favorable opinions of contests (Table 12).

Most executives, however, do not rule out entering contests. Nearly 60 percent of the APME respondents allow it, as do nearly 80 percent of the RTNDA members (Table 13). There was, however, wide disagreement on whether cash prizes should be accepted (Table 14).

News Judgment

Weighing the public right to know against individual rights to privacy continues as one of the most troubling journalistic ethical issues. Some respondents assumed an absolutist stance that information may be obtained in any manner, and all available information should be made public. Most, however, indicated desire, in varying degrees, to avoid violating legal or ethical privacy codes or generally accepted standards of behavior. In general, though, the news media seem more willing than in the past to withhold personal information which may be newsworthy but of limited significance. Print journalists use more such personal information than broadcasters, but such a difference probably results from the nature of print journalism rather than ethical differences.

When asked if names and addresses of burglarly victims should be made public, 85.4 percent of the RTNDA, 69.3 percent of the SPJ and 55.2 percent of the APME respondents said "no." Many, though, stipulated they would use names but no addresses. Responses were similar, although slightly stronger, on the question of publishing names and addresses of elderly crime victims who live alone.

Ninety percent of the news directors, 67.1 percent of the SPJ members and 55.2 percent of the managing editors said they would not publish details of non-newsworthy suicide cases.

All three organizations agreed at a rate of nearly 95 percent that the names of rape victims should not be published. Some qualifications were added, however, such as if the accused

were found not guilty.

Most respondents would not use routine bomb threats or names of hospital patients, although there was some disagreement. In the case of printing the names of people filing for divorce, the APME was divided, with 48.5 percent negative and 44 percent affirmative. Seventy-eight percent of the broadcasters said they would not use the information (Table 15). Names of people granted divorces are used more often, with 71 percent of the APME, 13 percent of RTNDA and 54.2 percent of the SPJ members saying they would use this information (Table 16).

As the questions in the survey turned more toward governmental information and journalistic technique, consensus declined noticeably. For example, respondents were split on whether journalists should use information obtained by eavesdropping outside a secret meeting. Nearly 40 percent of the APME members said "no," and 35.7 percent said "yes." More RTNDA members (47.7 percent) said "no," and 53.5 percent of the SPJ members said "no" (Table 17).

Similar lack of consensus was demonstrated on the question of whether to use information obtained from a member of a grand jury who had been sworn to secrecy. Forty-four percent of the news directors and 46.5 percent of the managing editors said they would use it, while only 35.4 percent of SPJ respondents approved (Table 18).

The majority of all three organizations, however, said they would use information obtained from the transcript of a grand jury proceeding provided by a confidential source (Table 19).

Most RTNDA and APME members also would use information obtained from sealed records of closed courtroom hearings, although most SPJ members said they would not (Table 20).

Conclusion to Survey A

In general, Survey A indicates growing consensus among journalists on how to cope with some of their traditional ethical problems. The results show considerable -- although far from total -- agreement on how to deal with such internal matters as conflict of interest, gifts, free travel, outside activities and freelancing. These results are especially impressive when compared with answers given to many of the same questions in a 1974 survey by the Associated Press Managing Editors.

But that consensus and the setting of definite policies on those issues have not ended the need for concern. Individual cases will always be on the agenda, and publicity surrounding these cases will continue to haunt journalists for whom credibility is a serious concern.

Also, increasing consideration is being given to such thorny matters as what information news audiences should have, how sensitive journalists should be to personal (perhaps private) material and what techniques are permissible in the quest for news.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS: SURVEY B

The 1983 study concluded that American journalists seem to be shifting the focus of their ethical concerns from such internal matters as gifts, favors and conflict of interest to such external matters as news judgment and acceptable

journalistic techniques. The respondents were seriously split in their assessments of what information should be made public and whether limits existed in how far they may go in their quest for information.

That lack of agreement is important in itself, but, on the other side of the coin, it represents at least two other significant considerations:

First, it indicates a rather dramatic shift of journalistic values. Journalism history indicates that for years the belief among reporters and editors was that their search for information was unrestricted. It's an exaggeration -- but not much -- to say that journalists made the decisions about news, and they accepted few limitations with regard to individual privacy, public taste and values, journalistic involvement in their stories and methods used in gathering the news. The 1983 study demonstrated that American journalism is a long way from what is depicted in "The Front Page."

Second, it demonstrates that American journalists are now closer in their thinking to those issues which are of greater significance to the nation's citizens. If journalism does have a credibility problem, the source of that problem is not to be found in answers to whether gifts are accepted or journalists are involved in activities which conflict with their news responsibilities.

Rather, such problems emerge from public attitudes that journalists at times do not demonstrate adequate respect for commonly accepted values of individual privacy, public decency,

failure represents street-level criticism and stands in stark contrast to statements of social responsibility and assertions that the news media function in the public interest based on "the public's right to know."

These findings prompted a 1984 followup, designed to take a more detailed look at journalistic standards and practices as they are reflected in values of news judgment and journalistic technique.

A basic element of Study B is that of competition versus conscience. If the other station or paper is planning to use a story, competitors often use whatever methods are necessary to get the information. If it's a scoop, journalists find it easier to justify content or technique. These attitudes are built into the system, but this survey indicates that a disparity exists between some journalists' perception of what is expected institutionally and what their own consciences tell them is ethical. The opinion that most news organizations would approve of actions that individual journalists, on their own, would not accept appeared in varying degrees in responses to all 30 case studies.

Responses also indicated that most journalists are showing greater respect for public attitudes about news and growing concern with credibility. On the other hand, respondents stressed that decisions about news content must be made in the newsroom, not based on outside restrictions.

Survey B found, basically, that journalistic independence does not preclude the possibility of human compassion and citizenship;

that many journalists are more willing to think about preserving public dignity and indivudal privacy; that when deceptive practices are deemed necessary, they should be within the context of a basic fairness which provides opportunities for response and/or which later results in an explanation of those deceptive practices; and that consideration of possible impact is necessary in determining whether a specific means of gathering information is appropriate.

Four categories of potential ethical disagreement -- privacy, deception, citizenship and technique -- were considered. Case studies (hypothetical, but based on reality) were presented (See Table 21), and respondents were asked to indicate how they gthought a typical news organization would handle the situations and how they personally would deal with the circumstances.

Privacy

Perhaps the most significant demonstration of journalistic concern for privacy is shown in differences between assessments of what probably would happen and what individual journalists would do in a given situation. Between 10 and 40 percent responded that they would prefer to do other than what they believed was typical newsgathering behavior. Journalists in the survey appeared to be more concerned about individual privacy than the general public assumes.

One example concerned an elementary school teacher charged with child molesting (Case 2). The charge came from a college student who claimed the teacher molested her eight years ago. Most of the teacher's current students support him. Will the news

Most of the teacher's current students support him. Will the news director or editor use a story with a photo of the college student making the charge? While 42.1 percent of the respondents believed the photo would be used, only 15.5 percent said they personally would have used it. Eighty-three percent said the photo should not be used.

The survey indicated also that public figures must accept the fact that their private lives are subject to scrutiny. Even here, however, journalists indicated the need for human consideration when specific information is more personal than the public needs to know.

Case 26, for example, concerns a House member accused of wife-beating. Because he is a public official, and the information is obtained from public documents (court records), 91 percent of the respondents said most news organizations would use the story. In this case, 80 percent of the journalists privatly agreed.

In circumstances involving the exposure of information about the families of public officials, such as Case 20, journalists demonstrated a greater tendency to disagree with their perception of standard procedure. Asked if it should be printed or broadcast that an anti-gay candidate has a homosexual son, 81 percent said the news would be used, but only 54 percent said it should be used.

Likewise, asked if most news organizations would use information about a 15-year-old shoplifting conviction of a candidate, 80 percent said yes. However, 57 percent personally

Another scenario described a second-hand report of disruptive behavior of the president's chief of staff in a restaurant (Case 18). Nearly half the respondents said the story would be used, but 81 percent said they would not use it.

And, in the case of a 13-year-old boy killing two other children, most respondents said both that the name and details would and should be used (Case 3). They did not agree, however, that the pictures of a woman's three children should be used after she shot another woman (Case 10). Comments indicated that innocent children should not be subject to publicity.

Deception

If the situation demands it and circumstances are right, the journalists responding to the survey defined some forms of deception as justifiable means to gain information for the public good. Not all journalists agreed on circumstances which they believe make deception acceptable, but four explanations appeared with some frequency in the comments:

(1) The end may justify the means, especially if the deception is a last resort.

(2) If full journalistic identification would place the reporter in danger, deception is reasonable.

(3) Some respondents found failure to provide identification acceptable as long as the journalist did not lie outright.

(4) Some types of stories seemed to need deception (consumer stories, etc.) to get a true picture.

However, because of an increasingly suspicious public and growing desire on the part of journalists to be seen as credible

and ethical, two standard practices related to the use of deception were advocated by a large number of the respondents.

First, when possible, stories should not be printed or broadcast until affected parties have had opportunities to respond. Second, deceptive methods should be admitted in the story and explained in detail.

One case study (Case 8) involved an unidentified reporter who walked the streets talking with people about local heroin use. Nearly 90 percent of the respondents agreed -- with the rationale being possible danger to the reporter -- that most news organizations would allow this deception, but only 76 percent personally agreed that it was ethical.

In a case involving unidentified news teams investigating alleged racial discrimination by real estate agents, 98 percent of the respondents agreed that the typical news organization would have done the same thing. And, privatly, 95 percent agreed with the decision (Case 6).

When, however, a reporter falsly identified herself to get information about a patient's condition from a hospital (Case 5), 54 percent said most papers and stations would allow it, but only 17 percent personally condoned the behavior.

Citizenship

The survey indicated that American journalists firmly believe they must maintain independence from government officials, but they also recognize some circumstances which allow room for human compassion and living up to their duties as

citizens. While they still hold that journalists alone must make judgments about what is news, a large number also indicated willingness to cooperate with law-enforcement and other officials under certain circumstances.

In Case 25, for example, the young son of an executive was being held for ransom, and reporters were asked to withhold news until the boy was freed. One editor in the case refused to wait and printed the story immediately. While 45 percent of the respondents said they believed this to be typical, only 14 percent agreed with the decision.

Comments indicated journalists believe that getting a story should never be more important than a person's safety. In cases not involving life-and-death situations, however, the respondents were more divided.

The responses to Case 1 (in which a reporter was asked to testify as a witness to a murder) were surprising, given the absolutist stance usually cited against testifying on issues related to a story. More than 86 percent responded that most journalists would testify at the trial, and more than 96 percent said they personally would take the stand.

Journalistic Technique

Because journalists are being criticized today more than ever, many are now willing to reassess newsgathering techniques in the interest of fair play and of improving the image of the news media. Techniques are being scrutinized more closely than ever.

Most respondents disagreed with newspapers and stations that allowed unannounced taping of telephone conversations, use of pictures containing obscene gestures, reporters putting words into subjects' mouths, use of overheard information, and deliberately downplaying a story because the competition had it first. Most did, however, approve of a specific use of unidentified sources and possible trespassing in pursuit of an important story.

CONCLUSION

While significant progress has been made in the past ten years toward developing more standard principles of news media performance, discrepancies still exist. Some journalists are allowed to receive free gifts; most are not. Some papers and stations will use the names and addresses of all crime victimes; some will not. Some aprove deception on occasion; some do not.

In spite of these expected differences, a rather dramatic shift of journalistic values is indicated by the results of these two surveys. Journalists no longer believe that their search for information is unrestricted. They are much closer in their thinking to those issues which are of importance to American citizens -- such as individual privacy, public decency, basic honesty and fair play.

The fact that the majority of journalists disagreed with many of the typical newsgathering procedures poses a possibility of gradual change in institutional practices. The disagreement between institutional tradition and individual preference is in

individual privacy and rights. Results indicate a greater respect for the people with whom journalists must deal and a growing understanding that the manner in which journalists do their jobs plays an important role in determining their credibility with the public.

This is not, however, intended to imply that journalism's ethical problems have been solved. Institutional tradition, born of competition and aggressive newsgathering, changes very slowly, and this probably is for the best. And, American journalism is made up of thousands of individuals who carefully guard their personal prerogatives. Attitudes and policy statements will be transformed only gradually into a new journalistic spirit. And these surveys indicate that such a new spirit, if it evolves, will be tempered by the normal fear of becoming considerate and cooperative to the point of endangering news media independence.

However, the studies do seem to indicate that constant reassessment of journalistic attitudes and actions as well as public concerns is taking place. Such reassessment could result in common principles which would serve the public interest, protect individual privacy, increase journalistic integrity and credibility, and maintain an aggressive, meaningful newsgathering industry.

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TABLE 1

Do you rule out all gifts?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Yes	30	17.1	25.3	22	26.3
Yes, except for token gifts	54.9	61.8	72.7	22	58.3
No	14.8	20.6	2.0	49	15.2
Other or no answer	0.3	0.5	0	7	0.2

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 2

Under any circumstances, will your broadcast station/newspaper accept a free trip for a reporter, commentator, editor or official?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Yes	12.4	15.1	19.1	40	14.5
No	35.8	34.7	50.6	27	39.2
Depends	51.1	48.7	23.5	16	45.5
Other	0	0	0	17	0
No Answer	0.7	1.5	0.8	0	0.8

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 3

If you should discover that any staff member is having gifts from sources sent to his or her home, would this be grounds for discharge?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Yes	18.7	26.1	41.1	27	25.7
No	6.3	2.0	5.4	13	5.4
Yes, if continued	25.4	31.2	39.4	19	29.9
Yes, if sneaking	16.7	9.0	5.8	1	11.3
Depends	28.8	27.1	1.2	32	22.3
Other	3.1	4.6	4.2	8	4.2
No Answer	1.0	0	2.9	0	1.2

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 4

Does your station/newspaper ever accept complimentary tickets to college and professional sports events?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Accept to cover only	45.8	29.1	61.0	46.1
Accept for sports staff to attend or cover	22.0	29.6	14.1	21.6
Accept for general staff to attend	10.9	30.2	4.6	13.1
Do not accept	19.4	8.0	18.3	16.9
Other	0.6	3.1	1.2	1.5
No Answer	1.3	0	0.8	0.8

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 5

What is your station's/newspaper's general policy toward the acceptance of free tickets to the theaters, movies, etc.?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Accept for reviewer only	40.7	15.6	43.2	19	36.4
Accept, but don't promise review	29.1	59.3	10.8	4	30.7
Do not accept	26.4	20.6	44.4	22	29.5
Other	2.3	3.0	0.8	55	2.0
No Answer	1.5	1.5	0.8	0	1.4

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 6

Do you have policies dealing with potential conflicts between a journalist's job and his or her spouse's job?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Yes	47.2	13.1	19.5	34.1
No	50.3	85.4	78.8	63.8
Depends	0.6	0	0	0.4
No answer	1.9	1.5	1.7	1.7

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 7

Do you have a stated policy for all news staffers on outside work and the acceptance of gifts, favors, tickets, free trips and the like?

	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Yes	63.3	83.4	9.0	74.3
No	36.7	15.8	52	25.2
Other	0	0	31	0
No answer	0	0.8	8.0	0.5

(N = RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 8

Do you permit news personnel to hold public office, either elective or appointive?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Yes	16.5	11.6	5.4	16	12.9
No	54.7	49.7	66.4	54	56.5
Appointive only	6.8	11.6	5.4	2	7.4
Discouraged	20.8	22.6	17.0	12	20.3
Other	0.7	3.0	3.3	16	1.7
No answer	0.5	1.5	2.5	0	1.2

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 9

Do you permit news personnel to become actively involved in political or ideological activities?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Yes	6.5	5.5	3.3	10	5.6
No	37.3	42.2	39.8	28	38.9
Discouraged	11.4	16.6	24.9	[illegible]	15.6
Noninterfering activities	13.3	17.6	10.4	13	13.4
Cannot cover same subject	27.4	8.5	7.5	9	19.1
Other	3.2	9.1	12.9	16	6.5
No answer	0.9	0.5	1.2	0	0.9

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 10

Are your staff members permitted to freelance stories and pictures, and, if so, is there any limit to whom they can sell?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
No	9.4	18.1	3.3	2	9.6
Noncompetitors only	47.7	27.1	56.4	62	45.7
Occasionally	2.9	4.5	2.1	1	3.0
Yes, with a limit	27.9	31.7	29.0	11	29.0
Yes, no limit	8.0	11.6	1.7	10	7.2
Other	3.8	5.5	6.7	14	4.8
No answer	0.3	1.5	0.8	0	0.7

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 11

Do you place restrictions on outside financial interests, such as stock ownership or proprietory interest in a financial venture?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Yes	32.4	17.6	30.3	6	29.1
No	62.7	81.4	66.4	76	67.2
Other	3.4	0	1.2	16	2.2
No answer	1.5	1.0	2.1	2	1.5

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 12

What is your general opinion of journalistic contests?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	74 APME	83 Total
Very favorable	6.1	7.0	3.7	8.8	5.7
Favorable	36.6	29.6	48.1	59.6	38.0
Neutral	35.6	34.2	29.0	21.9	33.8
Unfavorable	14.5	22.1	15.4	7.0	16.2
Very unfavorable	5.1	4.0	1.7	2.7	4.1
No answer	2.1	3.1	2.1	0	2.2

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 13

Is your staff encouraged or permitted to enter contests sponsored by corporations or interest groups?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Encouraged to enter	10.7	20.1	9.1	12.2
Permitted but not encouraged	54.5	58.8	49.4	54.2
Discouraged	21.1	13.6	24.5	20.4
Prohibited	10.7	4.5	12.4	9.9
Other	0.8	0.5	3.8	1.4
No answer	2.2	2.5	0.8	1.9

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 14

What is your policy on staff members' acceptance of cash awards in contests sponsored by non-journalistic corporations or interest groups?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Permit acceptance	46.3	31.2	38.6	41.6
Discouraged or prohibited	37.8	27.6	33.2	34.8
No policy	12.8	37.7	24.9	20.4
Other	1.4	0	0.8	1.0
No answer	1.7	3.5	2.5	2.2

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 15

Do you believe the news media should publish names of people who file for divorce?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Yes	40.4	13.1	44.0	35.9
No	55.2	77.9	48.5	58.1
Depends	1.9	7.0	6.2	3.9
No answer	2.5	2.0	1.3	2.1

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 16

Do you believe the news media should publish names of people granted a divorce?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Yes	54.2	13.1	71.0	50.2
No	40.9	77.4	19.1	42.8
Depends	2.2	7.0	7.4	4.4
No answer	2.7	2.5	2.5	2.6

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 17

Do you believe the news media should publish information obtained by eavesdropping outside the location of a secret meeting?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Yes	32.4	34.2	39.8	34.4
No	53.5	47.7	35.7	48.2
Depends	8.8	12.1	20.8	12.3
No answer	5.3	6.0	3.7	5.1

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 18

Do you believe the news media should publish information obtained in an interview with a member of a grand jury who has been sworn to secrecy?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Yes	35.4	44.7	46.5	39.8
No	53.2	41.2	28.2	45.0
Depends	6.8	8.0	23.7	11.0
No answer	4.6	6.1	1.6	4.2

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 19

Do you believe the news media should publish information obtained from the transcript of a grand jury proceeding provided by a confidential source?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Yes	45.7	62.3	50.6	50.0
No	40.9	23.6	20.3	32.7
Depends	7.4	10.0	26.6	12.4
No answer	6.0	4.1	2.5	4.9

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

TABLE 20

Do you believe the news media should publish information obtained from the sealed record of a closed courtroom hearing provided by a confidential source?

	83 SPJ	83 RTNDA	83 APME	83 Total
Yes	39.9	52.8	48.1	44.3
No	47.4	31.2	20.7	38.0
Depends	7.0	11.0	26.6	12.4
No answer	5.7	5.0	4.6	5.3

(N = SPJ, 587; RTNDA, 199; APME, 241)

Cases and responses

TABLE 21 (SURVEY B RESULTS)

		If such a decision could be made in a vacuum, with the only motivation being the dictates of your personal conscience, would you have done the same thing?	*Do you believe the typical commercial U.S. news organization, given normal competition, would have done the same thing?*
(1) A reporter was on undercover assignment that involved living with illegal immigrants to expose how such people are exploited by landlords, employers, police and immigration authorities. One night a fight broke out in the house he shared with 11 other people, and one man pulled out a pistol and killed another man. When the case came to trial, the reporter agreed to testify as an eyewitness to the killing.	Yes	86.1	96.0
	No	13.2	2.9
(2) Two days ago, a television station broke a story about a local elementary school teacher being arrested and charged with sexually molesting female pupils in his sixth-grade class. Yesterday 125 parents and students gathered in the auditorium of the school to support the teacher. A reporter from the station learned from a confidential source of a 20-year-old college student who claimed the teacher molested her eight years ago. The news director decided to use a story about the college coed, including a still photo of her.	Yes	42.1	15.5
	No	56.1	82.7
(3) A 13-year-old boy went on a shooting spree in his neighborhood, killing two children and injuring two others with his father's hunting rifle and a pistol. There are photos of the youth being handcuffed and put in the squad car. The editor decided that the severity of the situation merited use of the photos and the boy's full identification.	Yes	88.3	76.0
	No	11.1	23.1
(4) The lawyer for a former secretary of state complained that his client had been interviewed on tape by a reporter. The client is outraged, he said, because he did not know his remarks over the telephone were being taped. The reporter admitted the conversation was "off the record," but said he taped it so he could be assured his understanding of the information was correct.	Yes	56.7	30.8
	No	39.6	65.7
(5) A drunken driver almost killed a young girl, forcing her bicycle off the road and into a ditch. The reporter received no cooperation from hospital officials when she called for information. So, she had a fellow reporter call the hospital, identify himself as the girl's uncle and get the needed information from the physician on duty.	Yes	54.2	17.2
	No	45.0	81.7
(6) Reporters investigating alleged racial discrimination by local real estate agents were getting nowhere. They had interviewed officials of the local realtors' association and scores of realtors, all of whom denied that they steer black buyers away from houses for sale in white neighborhoods. The city editor sent two white reporters, one male and one female, to see what houses several real estate firms showed them when they expressed interest in a new house of a certain size and price range. Then she sent a black female and male to the same firms with the same requests.	Yes	97.7	95.2
	No	2.1	4.1
(7) There had been numerous killings, and police believed they were committed by the same person. It was difficult to get different angles on the story since the killings were virtually the same. Another victim was taken to the hospital. In the waiting room, a reporter, without identifying herself, consoled grief-stricken relatives, got coffee for them and chatted about the victim and the series of murders. Then she identified herself, conducted additional interviews and wrote the story.	Yes	89.7	63.3
	No	9.4	35.0
(8) A reporter wrote a major series of stories about local heroin use, including numerous comments from unidentified pushers and users. Most of this information came from weeks spent on the street talking with these pushers and users and, in fact, frequently witnessing the sale and use of heroin. At no time did he identify himself to these people as a reporter.	Yes	89.7	76.0
	No	8.8	21.9

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		If such a decision could be made in a vacuum, with the only motivation being the dictates of your personal conscience, would you have done the same thing?	*Do you believe the typical commercial U.S. news organization, given normal competition, would have done the same thing?*
(9) A television photographer, covering a picket-line disruption at a local meat-packing plant, came back with film footage which showed an angry striker making an obscene gesture at state troopers who were called in and used tear gas to disperse demonstrators. The station opened its newscast with the film footage containing the familiar gesture.	Yes	65.2	45.9
	No	32.9	50.6
(10) One mother shot another mother after their children fought over seats on the school bus. A photographer made shots of the accused mother on the ground being handcuffed and another of her three children emerging later from their house with their hands in the air. The paper used both shots.	Yes	76.5	43.2
	No	22.1	53.7
(11) Suspicion about a newspaper ad led the consumer reporter to investigate a ticket-selling offer. She called the number listed in the ad using a fictitious name. She continued her investigation under the fictitious identity and found laws had been violated by the operation. As part of the story, she told how she obtained the information.	Yes	92.4	80.9
	No	6.6	17.8
(12) A reporter who covers higher education attended a local school board meeting to complain about her son's education, specifically the teaching of evolution. Although the paper seldom covered meetings of that particular school board, the city editor, who knew beforehand of the reporter's plans, sent another reporter to do a story. The complaining reporter was not identified as an employee of the paper.	Yes	33.8	19.6
	No	64.4	78.3
(13) After covering a school board meeting, a reporter questioned the board president about the board's defiance of Supreme Court rulings against religious teachings in the public schools. Near the end of the interview, the reporter said, "Some of your critics say you are giving the finger to the Supreme Court." The board president responded: "If someone doesn't give them the finger every now and then, nothing ever changes. Now don't print those words. They were yours, not mine." In the belief that she had made no agreement with the board president, the reporter used the quote.	Yes	63.9	31.0
	No	34.7	67.1
(14) During a public city council meeting, reporters were asked to leave the meeting while council members discussed a delicate personnel matter in an executive session. While waiting for the session to end, one reporter discovered a place where she could overhear the council discussion. The conversation was about a high-level appointed city official who had been accused of racial bias. Council members and the accused official later refused comment. The reporter wrote the story based on the overheard comments and including the refusals to comment.	Yes	66.9	39.6
	No	30.9	57.8
(15) Working for a broadcast station in a university town, a reporter did a detailed story about the widespread use of cocaine. He was invited to attend a party where cocaine was likely to be used, provided no one at the party be identified. The reporter went to the party and wrote a story about drug usage without any identification of persons involved.	Yes	91.3	78.2
	No	7.3	19.6
(16) Six days before a statewide election, a reporter received an anonymous tip that the candidate for lieutenant governor had been convicted of shoplifting about 15 years before. Eight months later, the conviction was vacated under a program designed to clear records of offenders not likely to repeat their crimes. After determining that the information was correct, the reporter wrote a story which the paper carried on Page 1.	Yes	80.2	40.8
	No	17.7	56.8

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		If such a decision could be made in a vacuum, with the only motivation being the dictates of your personal conscience, would you have done the same thing?	*Do you believe the typical commercial U.S. news organization, given normal competition, would have done the same thing?*
(17) A reporter learns that 12 U.S. citizens were being held hostage in the U.S. Embassy in a small Asian country. The source said other reporters were piecing the story together but had not yet gained verification. The reporter confirmed the story with the top assistant to the secretary of state who asked that the story be withheld because of possible danger to the hostages. The reporter, knowing someone else would break the story, ignored the request and wrote a complete account.	Yes	64.0	26.0
	No	32.5	70.1
(18) While at a cocktail party the night before a heated primary election, a reporter heard the restaurant owner and two other people discussing how the incumbent president's chief of staff was thrown out of a the party for excessive drinking and abusing female customers. The two people were known to reporters and had been reliable sources in the past. Knowing time was very short before deadline, the reporter called the office and dictated a short, but complete, account of the incident.	Yes	47.4	17.6
	No	50.9	80.6
(19) Although no incidents had occurred, two reporters were suspicious about the quality of security at the local airport. As a test, they attempted to sneak dummy Molotov cocktails through airport security even though such trickery is in violation of their station's policy.	Yes	21.8	7.7
	No	76.3	90.2
(20) A reporter was assigned to the campaign of a candidate for governor who had caught the fancy of the silent majority with his conservative views and his anti-press speeches. When asked at a press conference about his views on gay rights, the candidate said he was "slightly to the right of Anita Bryant." The reporter later discovered and wrote a story about the fact that the candidate's son was a homosexual living with another man.	Yes	81.0	54.1
	No	17.2	43.0
(21) A reporter received a tip that useful information about a militant anti-war group might be found in the trash cans behind the house of the group's president. The source said old files were being tossed out. The reporter checked the trash cans late that night, found the files and gained enough information for a major story.	Yes	90.3	76.8
	No	7.0	19.4
(22) A prisoner at a state correctional facility escaped, a fact which gained considerable publicity. The next day, the hunted inmate called a reporter and said he wanted to set the record straight about his convictions for assault with a deadly weapon, bad checks and drunken driving. He complained that the crimes were blown out of proportion. The reporter agreed to meet the inmate, conducted an interview and wrote a major story.	Yes	83.8	63.1
	No	14.3	33.1
(23) An investigative reporter wrote a series of articles on inadequate and improper treatment at a local mental institution. He gained the information by having himself admitted as a patient under an assumed name and identification. He scouted the institution for about a week. Upon his release, he identified himself as a reporter and supplemented his personal observations by interviewing former patients, hospital officials and staff members.	Yes	91.3	80.5
	No	7.2	17.7

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		If such a decision could be made in a vacuum, with the only motivation being the dictates of your personal conscience, would you have done the same thing?	Do you believe the typical commercial U.S. news organization, given normal competition, would have done the same thing?
(24) A reporter had been running periodic page 1 stories as the result of a long-term investigative project on the mayor's involvement in statewide gambling operations. The opposition had been running behind consistently, but today scored a major break. The reporter checked out the opposition story, added some minor elements and modified the focus. Essentially, however, her story was a rewrite of the opposition's story. Her editors buried the story on Page 14.	Yes	62.6	32.1
	No	32.6	62.6
(25) The 16-year-old son of a General Motors executive was being held for ransom by three young kidnappers who earlier had terrorized the entire family and stolen money from them. Police and GM officials asked the news media to withhold news of the kidnapping until the hostage was freed. A newspaper editor, however, didn't believe the media should cooperate with police. He decided the story was too big to hold and had it published.	Yes	45.0	14.3
	No	52.5	82.2
(26) Sifting through filings for divorce, a reporter discovered a petition from a woman who wanted a divorce after 23 years of marriage to a prominent member of the state House of Representatives. In the petition, she claimed she was recently beaten by her husband. She said she feared for herself and her children and requested the court to give her the marital home, custody of the three children and to order her husband to participate in mental health tests. The reporter wrote the story.	Yes	91.1	80.2
	No	7.4	17.7
(27) Police informed a reporter of plans to make a sweep of arrests for prostitution at a local park. They requested that the newspaper publish the names of persons arrested. The paper normally does not publish the names of persons arrested on minor morals charges, but the city editor decided to use the list on this occasion.	Yes	48.0	28.6
	No	50.1	69.9
(28) The community was upset over continuing instances of purse-snatching by juveniles in the downtown area. A photographer had been sent to a major department store on routine assignment. As he walked toward the store, he saw a boy, about 14, walking up behind an elderly woman who was waiting for a bus. The photographer was suspicious, so he prepared his camera and snapped several shots of the boy as he grabbed the woman's purse and fled.	Yes	93.4	85.4
	No	3.6	11.3
(29) The same photographer was asked by the police to provide copies of these pictures, including those which were not published in the paper, to assist in the investigation. The photographer provided copies of every picture he took.	Yes	50.3	54.7
	No	47.6	43.6
(30) A once-popular movie star, retired for five years, was getting married for the fourth time. The woman he was marrying was from the local community, so the ceremony was in a local church and the reception at the local country club. The couple had requested no coverage of the wedding and reception. A reporter managed to get copies of the invitations to both events, attended unidentified and wrote stories about both events.	Yes	74.6	32.9
	No	22.8	64.9

(N = 909; No Response rate varied between 2 and 48)

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APPENDIX A

Issues of Journalistic Ethics

This survey is sponsored by the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, in cooperation with the Associated Press Managing Editors Association and the Radio-Television News Directors Association. It represents an effort to enhance our understanding of journalistic standards and practices. Your opinion and knowledge are important in this effort, and we ask you to take the small amount of time required to complete this questionnaire. We encourage your comments, either in the space provided here or in a separate letter. Thank you for your willingness to help. -- Ralph S. Izard, E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio 45701

Please circle the most appropriate response

Other answer or comment

1. Under any circumstances, do you believe the news media should accept a free trip for a reporter, commentator, editor or other official?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Depends

2. Do you believe the news media should rule out all gifts?
   1. Yes
   2. Yes, except for token gifts
   3. No

3. How should the news media handle gifts which are sent to the office?
   1. Staff share
   2. Return or donate

4. If it were discovered that a staff member had gifts from sources sent to his or her home, should this be grounds for discharge?
   1. Yes
   2. No
   3. Yes, if continued
   4. Yes, if sneaking
   5. Depends

5. What should be the news media's general policy toward acceptance of free tickets to theaters, movies, etc.?
   1. Accept for reviewer only
   2. Accept, but don't promise review
   3. Don't accept

6. Should the news media accept complimentary tickets to college and professional sports events?
   1. Accept to cover only
   2. Accept for sports staff to attend or cover
   3. Accept for general staff to attend
   4. Do not accept

7. What should be the news media's policy on staff "moonlighting" or holding down other paying jobs in addition to work done for the principal journalistic employer?
   1. Nonconflicting positions only
   2. Noncompeting media only
   3. With permission
   4. No policy

8. Do you believe news media staff members should be permitted to freelance stories and pictures, and, if so, should there be any limit to whom they can sell?
   1. No
   2. Noncompetitors only
   3. Occasionally
   4. Yes, with a limit
   5. Yes, no limit

9. Do you believe some paid "moonlighting" jobs are more acceptable than others?
   1. Yes
   2. No

10. Do you believe teaching is acceptable as a paid "moonlighting" job?

Other answer or comment

1. Yes
2. No

11. Should unpaid appearances on radio and television stations be acceptable?

1. Yes
2. No

12. Should restrictions be placed on outside financial interests, such as stock ownership or proprietory interest in a financial venture?

1. Yes
2. No

13. Should the news media have policies dealing with potential conflicts between a journalist's job and his or her spouse's job?

1. Yes
2. No

14. Should the news media accept ads or commercials with a promise that a staffer will do a story in return?

1. Yes
2. No

15. Should sports staffers be permitted to serve as announcers or as official scorers at college or professional events?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Scorers, not announcers

16. Should sports staffers be permited to handle sports promotional work on the side?

1. Yes
2. No

17. Should news personnel hold public office, either elective or appointive?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Appointive only
4. Discouraged

18. Should news personnel become actively involved in political or ideological activities?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Discouraged
4. Yes, but noninterfering activities
5. Yes, but should not cover same subject

19. Should a distinction be made between newsroom policies and the rest of the organization – management, advertising, etc. – in the area of outside activities?

1. Yes
2. No

20. Do you believe the news media generally handle corrections effectively?

1. Yes
2. No

21. Which of the following do you believe is most effective in handling corrections?

1. Newspapers
2. Magazines
3. Radio
4. Television

Other answer or comment

22. What is your general opinion of journalistic contests?

1. Very favorable
2. Favorable
3. Neutral
4. Unfavorable
5. Very unfavorable

23. Should news media staff be encouraged or permitted to enter contests sponsored by corporations or interest groups?

1. Encouraged to enter
2. Permitted, but not encouraged
3. Discouraged
4. Prohibited

24. Should the policy on contests be different if a corporation or interest group has veto power over qualified entries?

1. No difference
2. More favorable
3. Entries discouraged
4. Entries prohibited

25. Should the policy on contests be different if public relations persons are included among the judges?

1. No difference
2. More favorable
3. Entries discouraged
4. Entries prohibited

26. Should the policy on contests be different if a corporation or interest group's name is part of the award?

1. No difference
2. More favorable
3. Entries discouraged
4. Entries prohibited

27. What should be the policy on staff members' acceptance of cash awards in contests sponsored by non-journalistic corporations or interest groups?

1. Permit acceptance
2. Discourage or prohibit acceptance
3. No policy

28. Should the news media encourage or discourage staff participation in journalistic contests?

1. Encourage participation
2. Depends on contest
3. Neutral
4. Discourage

A person is arrested and charged with driving while intoxicated. How much media attention should be devoted to that story if that person were:

29. The president of the largest local bank?

1. Major attention
2. Some attention
3. Little attention
4. No attention

30. The mayor?

1. Major attention
2. Some attention
3. Little attention
4. No attention

31. A local farmer?

1. Major attention
2. Some attention
3. Little attention
4. No attention

Other answer or comment

32. How much story attention should a news medium devote to a charge by the mayor that that medium deliberately slanted a story?
1. Major attention
2. Some attention
3. Little attention
4. No attention

Do you believe the news media should publish the following information?

YES NO

_____ _____ 33. Names and addresses of victims of routine burglaries
_____ _____ 34. Names and addresses of elderly crime victims who live alone
_____ _____ 35. Cause of death when non-newsworthy figure commits suicide in unexceptional circumstances
_____ _____ 36. Names of rape victims
_____ _____ 37. Routine bomb threats
_____ _____ 38. Names of hospital patients
_____ _____ 39. Names of people who file for divorce
_____ _____ 40. Names of people granted a divorce
_____ _____ 41. Information obtained by eavesdropping outside the location of a secret meeting
_____ _____ 42. Information obtained in an interview with a member of a grand jury who has been sworn to secrecy
_____ _____ 43. Information obtained from the transcript of a grand jury proceeding provided by a confidential source
_____ _____ 44. Information obtained from the sealed record of a closed courtroom hearing provided by a confidential source

45. What is your age?
1. Under 20
2. 21-40
3. 41-60
4. More than 60

46. Which of the following categories best describes your occupation?
1. Radio
2. Television
3. Newspaper
4. Magazine
5. Public Relations
6. Advertising
7. Photography
8. Teacher
9. Student
10. Other (please specify)

47. May we use your name in attributing any comments you provide on this questionnaire? If so, please complete the following (please print):

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Location: _____

AGAIN, PLEASE ACCEPT OUR THANKS FOR YOUR HELP ON THIS SURVEY.